

the surviving families and friends of the victims of Flight 800 and encourage my colleagues to join me in commending each of them for the grace and dignity with which they have handled unspeakable pain.

#### INVESTIGATING THE PROSECUTION OF FORMER BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today is day 181st day of incarceration for two U.S. Border Patrol agents.

Agents Ramos and Compean were convicted last spring for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our border into Texas. For almost a year, thousands of American citizens and dozens of Members of Congress have asked President Bush to pardon these agents. Many Americans are outraged by the President's decision to commute the sentence of White House aid Scooter Libby, while at the same time he refuses to pardon Border Patrol Agents Ramos and Compean.

Scooter Libby, an attorney who understands the laws of this country and should know right from wrong was convicted of perjury, obstruction of justice and lying to investigators. Mr. Libby, who should have served his sentence, did not spend one day in prison.

Yet two Border Patrol agents with exemplary records who were doing their duty to protect the American people from an illegal alien drug smuggler are serving 11 and 12 years, respectively, in prison. By attempting to apprehend an illegal alien drug smuggler, these agents were enforcing our laws, not breaking the laws. There are legitimate legal questions about how this prosecution was initiated and how the U.S. Attorney's Office proceeded in this case.

I am extremely pleased that Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN will be presiding over a full committee hearing tomorrow to examine the details of this case. This hearing will provide U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton an opportunity to explain to the Senate Judiciary Committee and to the American people why this U.S. Attorney's Office in western Texas chose to go after law enforcement officers while protecting illegal aliens who committed crimes and gave the illegal alien immunity to testify against the border agents.

I want to thank Senator FEINSTEIN for her interest in this case and for her leadership in holding hearings to look into this injustice.

I am also grateful to Chairman JOHN CONYERS, who I hope will hold a similar hearing on the House side sometime this fall.

Before I close, I want to say to the families of Border Patrol Agents

Compean and Ramos that we, the American people, will not forget your husbands, your fathers, your brothers, and we will do everything we can to see that justice will prevail over an injustice.

#### NO MORE "STAY THE COURSE"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, the President continues to ask this Congress and the American people to "stay the course" in Iraq. Well, Mr. President, today the American people and the Congress have said "no more."

Today I add my voice once again to the growing number of retired military generals, the Iraq Study Group, and untold thousands of rank and file on the front lines who were calling for a new direction in Iraq. The success of our military depends on a sound strategy. Yet instead of fighting the terrorists in the mountains of Afghanistan, our armed forces are overextended after 4 years of refereeing a civil war in the sands of Iraq.

The President's escalation of this war, his so-called surge, is not working. That much is clear. Since the escalation of this war 6 months ago, more than 25,000 troops have been sent to Iraq, 600 more U.S. soldiers have died, and more than 3,000 troops have been wounded. Countless thousands of Iraqis are dead, and today the violence in Iraq is at an all-time high. Those are facts that no one can deny.

Our troops have performed heroically in Iraq, but the Iraqi Government has failed to meet any, any of the benchmarks endorsed by the President in January. Political reconciliation within Iraq is nonexistent. A change of course is long overdue.

The time has come for the United States to responsibly redeploy our troops from Iraq and to refocus our efforts on protecting Americans from terrorism. The time has come for Iraqis to take primary responsibility for their country and for their security.

Let me be clear on one additional point. Democrats support the troops.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I personally have consistently voted to fund our troops and to provide our soldiers in the line of fire with the resources that they need. I do this because our brave servicemen and women are not risking their lives each and every day for one political party over another. They are risking their lives for America.

Our Nation owes our troops a strategy that is worthy of their sacrifice. But "stay the course" is not that strategy. It is a slogan that continues to fail them.

No, Mr. Speaker, if we really want to support our troops, it is time to get them out of Iraq and redeploy them to other areas where they can fight the

terrorists who have attacked and who continue to threaten our Nation. That's where the war on terror should be waged.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### SCHIP REAUTHORIZATION AND HEALTH DISPARITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for the reauthorization and expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program or SCHIP, our Nation's health care safety net for low-income, uninsured children.

We are at a critical juncture in our Nation's health care crisis. An estimated 46 million Americans are uninsured. Approximately 18,000 people die each year in this country as a direct consequence of being uninsured. Sadly, many of the victims are innocent children. No fewer than 9 million American children are without health insurance, and they are suffering as a result.

Uninsured children, like uninsured adults, are less likely to have access to early and preventive care, setting them up for a lifetime of health problems that may have been avoided if caught today. Far too many of our children are going to the emergency room because we have failed to let them into the doctor's office.

This is immoral, but it is also uneconomical. Preventive health care services are cheaper than disease management and trauma care. By denying our citizenry the former, we are paying a premium for the latter.

The President has ignored the potential cost savings, arguing, instead, that an expanded SCHIP program would move children off of private insurance, but that is simply not the case. The vast majority of children who would be covered by this bill come from families with less than \$33,200 for a family of three. These families do not have the luxury of choosing private insurance over the public benefit. For them, it is public coverage or nothing.

We have a moral obligation to ensure that our children have access to health care. Our health care system produces infant mortality rates and incidences